

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

Disclosed is a system through which the nature of a problem in an apparatus is analyzed and the appropriate countermeasures displayed automatically by a computer

5 that is capable of responding to an inquiry in the proper manner, thereby making it possible to determine the cause of the problem accurately and to deal with the problem quickly in round-the-clock support. A printer includes a controller having an internal store of

10 information concerning sites to which inquiries regarding printer problems may be directed. A service depot computer is queried with regard to printer problems requiring maintenance by a serviceman. In a case where, depending upon the measures taken by the

15 customer, it is possible for the customer to solve the problem himself without the assistance of a serviceman, a customer support computer is queried in regard to the nature of the problem. A message concerning countermeasures is received from the service depot

20 computer or customer support computer and is displayed on a host computer. In a case where the problem can be dealt with through a simple operation, the host computer itself analyzes the nature of the problem and displays the countermeasures.